

William

PARS

Western Turkey in Watercolour



William Pars

(b London, 28 Feb 1742; d Rome, 1782)

William Pars first established himself in London as a portrait painter, exhibiting at the Society of Artists in 1760 and at the Free Society of Artists from 1761. In 1764 he won the third premium of the Royal Society of Arts for his history painting depicting Caractacus before the Emperor Claudius (untraced). In the same year he was selected by the Dilettanti Society to accompany Richard Chandler and Nicholas Revett on an archaeological expedition to Western Turkey (1764–6). His views of Classical monuments in the province of ancient Ionia were engraved and published in *Ionian Antiquities* (1769).

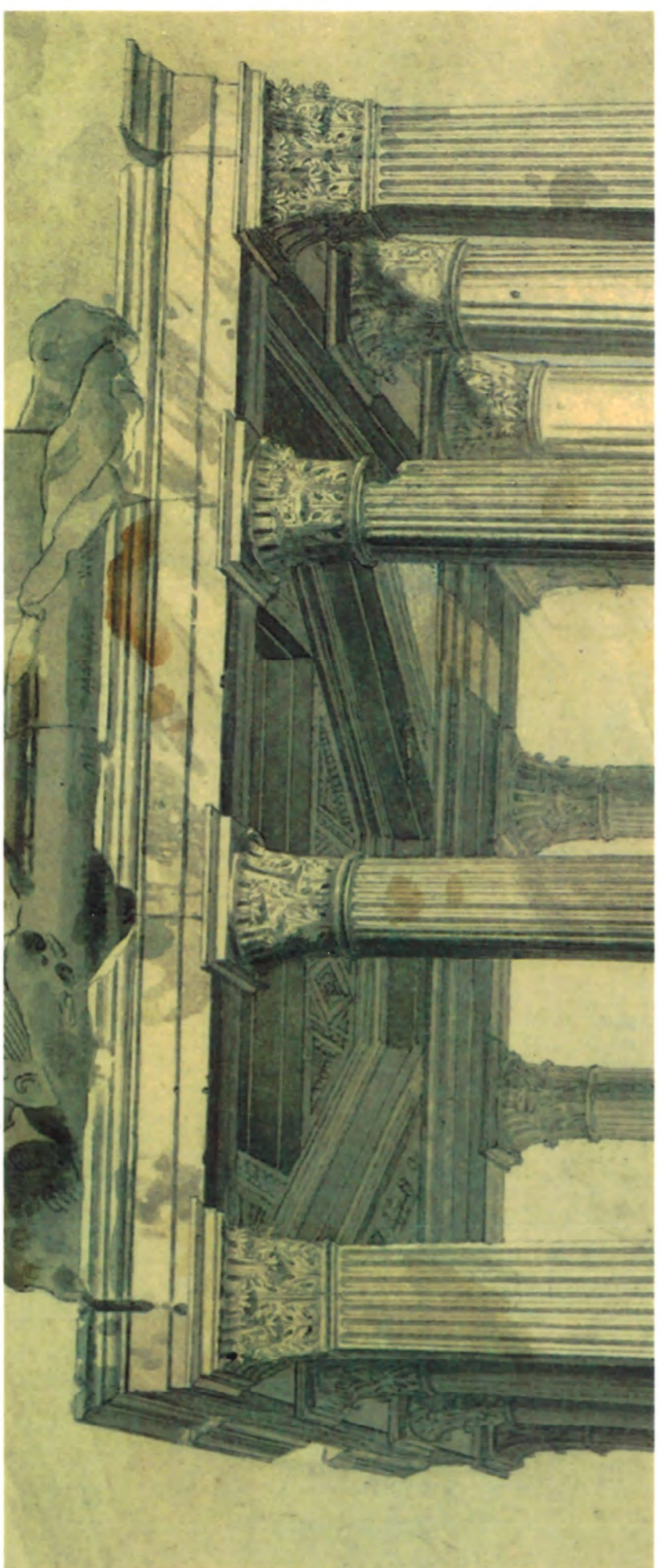
Although he had trained as a portrait painter, Pars' watercolours demonstrate his skills as a topographer and his sensitivity to the exotic landscape and its inhabitants.

Tragically, Pars died young after catching a cold from sketching while standing in the waters at Tivoli, Hadrian's villa to the east of Rome.



TEMPLE OF APOLLO DIDYMÆA NEAR MITYLÆA











Arch at Mylasa

William Pars

1764-1765

Pen and grey ink with watercolour and bodycolour and some gum arabic

Ruined building with a large arch to right; an Englishman, presumably Revett, measuring the cornice at the top; beyond, a figure carrying a pitcher, and a man leading a camel; earth piled up in foreground to left.

A ladder can be seen to the left of the arch in the watercolour. The gate is a relic of the Roman period dating from the 2nd century AD.

Museum No: Mm,11.72

Ruins of the Gymnasium at Ephesus

William Pars

1764

Pen and grey ink and watercolour, some gum arabic

The remains of brick arches supporting solid masonry, with three travellers and tent in left foreground, and Turkish guides in the centre.

Ephesus was the largest and most important trading centre on the Aegean coast and its population rose to 250,000 in the 1st century AD. The gymnasium with its athletics hall, swimming pool and baths complex was built in the 2nd century AD. By the 6th century the city was in decline, and by the time of Chandler's expedition it had long been in ruins.

Museum No: Mm,11.64

**Ruins of the Temple of Apollo
Didymaeus from the NE**

William Pars

1765

Pen and grey and black ink and watercolour, with gum arabic and some bodycolour; rubbed over with graphite for transfer to engraver's plate

Ruins of the Temple of Apollo Didymus from the NE; two fluted Ionic columns standing centre l with piles of stone behind, further column in l distance, figures amongst the ruins, goatherds at prayer in foreground.

Museum No: Mm,11.65

Sepulchral Monument at Mylasa

William Pars

1764-1765

Pen and grey ink with watercolour and bodycolour
and some gum arabic

Square shaped monument, resting on massive pedestal with doorway on front side, with four fluted columns above on all sides surmounted by low dome-like structure, standing on brow of hill to right overlooking field and houses to left and mountains in distance, figures lie beside base of building.

Museum No: Mm,11.73

The Theatre at Miletus with the party crossing in a ferry

William Pars

1764

Pen and black ink with watercolour and gum

Miletus - thirty-five kilometres south of Ephesus - was before its destruction by the Persians 494 BC the centre of the Ionian Enlightenment in art and philosophy. Its fortunes revived and it became a thriving port in the Hellenistic and Roman periods. Its theatre dates from the 4th century BC with a capacity of 5,000. It was enlarged by the Romans to hold 15,000 and used for gladiatorial shows and wild animal fights. It is now some eight kilometres inland.

Museum No: Mm,11.63

Capital from the Temple of Athene Polias at Priene, with the Valley of the Maeander

William Pars

1765

Fallen capital lying on edge of hill, overlooking plain with river. Watercolour and bodycolour, some pen and brown ink, red chalk and gum arabic; the paper extended by a strip on top.

Museum No: Mm,11.78

The Theatre at Miletus is here shown with the party crossing in a ferry. One horse and rider, evidently Richard Chandler, is already embarked, to the left Nicholas Revett and William Pars, still mounted, are attempting to board.

The artist, who trained as a portrait painter appears to be more interested in the human and animal subjects than he is in the ancient architecture which is relegated to the middle distance. The group as a whole is organised with gusto, and with concentrated interest in the colouring of the horses' trappings and the Turkish costume.

William Pars &
His Life

The Society of
Dilettanti

Intro Wall

Other drawings

Interactive map to follow
the footsteps of Pars
Images of Drawings and
information about the
ancient sites

The Drawing

Display cases for Albums and Books